

**Zaid: I regret challenging Azmin for PKR deputy
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In a single election cycle, Zaid Ibrahim has gone from Umno minister to PKR central committee member and then to Parti Kita president.

Despite his political rollercoaster, Zaid takes pride in having resigned from the government to protest the arrests of Seputeh MP Teresa Kok, blogger Raja Petra Kamaruddin and Sin Chew reporter Tan Hoon Cheng under the Internal Security Act.

When asked about his regrets, Zaid in an interview with Malaysiakini at his residence yesterday said it was a mistake to have challenged PKR deputy president Azmin Ali for the number two post when he was in PKR.

"The regret I think was... challenging Azmin for the deputy post in PKR, because I didn't know the party.

"The party was not ready for direct elections; it was a mess... looking back, it was not the right decision (to challenge Azmin).

"My mistake was... I had a lot of support in the party; I thought I could do something different, to change PKR.

"But I overlooked this fact that (PKR supremo) Anwar Ibrahim needed somebody he could trust because of his position. (After all) he might be going in (to jail over Sodomy II).

"So challenging Azmin (left) was a mistake in that sense," he said, adding that he was at that time a newcomer to the party.

After Zaid's resignation from the government and Umno, he was roped into PKR in 2009 as Pakatan Rakyat's policy coordinator, to lay the groundwork for the coalition's Common Policy Framework.

In 2010, he challenged Azmin for PKR's deputy president post but later dropped out after accusing his opponent of electoral fraud during the party polls.

The episode led to a war of words, and in the fallout Zaid resigned from PKR and formed Kita.

'Mistake to open Kita like supermarket'

Another regret, Zaid said, was in "freely giving out" membership forms to join Kita, a party that he is now mulling to dissolve.

"The other mistake was of course when I formed Kita, I should have been more careful. I should have taken the right kind of people slowly.

"I should have interviewed them instead of opening like a supermarket," he said.

This oversight, he said, has led to some Kita members who have no belief in the party's cause and have their own agendas.

While admitting his zigzag history meant his political future isn't looking bright, he acknowledged it has been a lesson.

"Of course it's a learning curve. I'm too old... but well it's never too late to learn from mistakes," said Zaid, who turns 61 in April.

"But there are not that many mistakes in my life," he added, laughing.

Prior to his foray into national politics, Zaid was the founder of Zaid Ibrahim & Co, the largest private law firm in the country, whose shares he relinquished when joining the government.

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